

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants respectfully acknowledge that the Examiner has allowed claim 13 and has indicated that claims 4-11, and 19-22 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 4, 12 and 15-20 have been cancelled, claims 1, 5, 6, 14 and 21-23 have been amended, and claim 24 has been newly presented. Claims 1-3, 5-11, 13, 14 and 21-24 are pending in the application. Reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the pending application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Satomi et al., (JP 08275484, hereinafter "Satomi"); claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cory (U.S. Patent No. 3,394,295), claims 12 and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nikaido (U.S. Patent No. 4,099,106) in view of Ichii et al., (JP 2002-199689, hereinafter "Ichii"), and claims 12 and 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chun (U.S. Patent Publication 2001/0043016) in view of Ichii. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In the Official Action, the Examiner indicated that the subject matter claims 4, 19 and 20 is allowable. Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended to include the

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subject matter of claim 4, which the Examiner has indicated as being allowable.

Applicants further note that claim 14 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 19, which the Examiner has indicated as being allowable. Applicants further note that newly presented claim 24 includes the subject matter of claim 20, which the Examiner has indicated as being allowable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of the present amendments, withdrawal of the present rejections, and allowance of all of the pending claims. In this regard, Applicants note that the current amendments merely redraft allowable dependent claims into independent form, and thus are proper for entry after Final rejection.

Independent claims 1, 13, 14 and 24 are now in condition for allowance in view of the amendments and the above-noted remarks, and the remaining dependent claims, are also submitted to be in condition for allowance in view of their dependence from the allowable base claims and also at least based upon their recitations of additional features of the present invention. It is respectfully requested, therefore, that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn and that an early indication of the allowance thereof be given.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based on prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to be attached thereto.

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Applicants respectfully request entry of the present amendments, which merely redraft allowable dependent claims into independent form, and thus are proper for entry after Final rejection. Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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